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Lithographs & Etchings

GEORGES ROUAULT

May 6th — May 25th

BUCHHOLZ GALLERY

CURT VALENTIN

32 East 57th Street, New York

LIBRARY

When asked how he made his etchings, Rouault is said to have replied, "They give me a copper plate, and I just dig into it." It will be seen that "etching" is but a secondary process in the prints he so designates. In his paintings he combined oil, tempera, gouache, pastel, watercolor and India ink in an infinite variety of ways; when he turned to print-making he showed the same copious ingenuity and disrespect for all conventions. . . .

First his preliminary drawing is reproduced on the copper plate by the photomechanical process of

heliogravure. He then used almost every instrument known to the engraver, and every acid known to the etcher in order to render to his satisfaction the tones and values of his unique images. He engraves with a burin; he shades with a roulette, a rasp and often with emery paper. Sometimes he applies the acid directly to the copper with the aid of a brush, without any covering of wax, to produce those famous blacks of varying intensity or to get the smooth or granular surfaces which please him. In short, he uses nearly every technique save that of aquatint, which the final result often resembles.

31.V. 1940.

In the complicated color etchings for *Le Cirque de l'Etoile Filante* and *Passion,* the process is the same, but, many plates being required, he employs expert assistants with whom he collaborates closely: he uses them like extra implements.

The lithographs are not made with crayon alone. He makes his first sketch upon the stone with brush in lithotint. Afterward, with the crayon, he shades his blacks and grays as usual, but he also uses a scraper and emery paper. He occasionally makes transfer-lithographs also, as in the case of his extraordinary self-portrait. . . .

For although there have been many masters of black and white, it may be said that there has never been so great a master of black alone. I can think of no other artist who has obtained variations so like color, so liquid and so luminous that certain of these great etchings achieve the effect of black and white reproductions of oil paintings.

MONROE WHEELER:
The Prints of Georges Rouault,
Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1938

Reproductions in this announcement are taken from Le Cirque de l'Etoile Filante.